spite of and sometimes because of it, civil strife and foreign invasion often devastated the land. Under it injustice and inhumanity were to a certain extent fairly chronic and at times widespread. Occasionally it broke down almost completely.

The Chinese seem never to have been so successful in ruling subject peoples or peoples of very diverse racial stocks and cultures as were the Romans or as have been the British, the French, and the Dutch.

When all of this has been said, however, the fact remains that seldom has any large group of mankind been so prosperous and so nearly contented as were the .Chinese under this governmental machinery when it was dominated by the ablest of the monarchs of the Han, the Tang, the Sung, the Ming, and the Ch'ing. It was due largely to their government, moreover, that the Chinese achieved and maintained so remarkable a cultural unity and displayed such skill—all the more notable because they were partly unconscious of it—in assimilating invaders. When one recalls how Western Europe, no larger than China proper and with no more serious internal barriers of geography, failed, both to its great profit and infinite distress, to win either political or cultural unity, the achievement of the Chinese becomes little short of phenomenal. It was, indeed, a success which ultimately defeated itself. Political and cultural unity, with the concomitant lack of the stimulus which comes from variety, tended dangerously toward self-satisfaction and stagnation, and so, ultimately, toward weakness and decay.

fWhy were the Chinese so successful in their government?

A completely accurate answer is probably unattainable, .for it would have to take into account such elusive

factors as inherited racial characteristics and the as yet unknown prehistory. A few contributing elements, however, seem fairly clear. Of these, one was certainly the political- and social-mindedness of the educated classes. When, in the throbbing intellectual life of the Chou, the Chinese first began to put down in writing anything like an adequate record of themselves, the articulate were largely absorbed with political and social themes. The chief concern of most of the outstanding thinkers of the Chou was the present well-being of man—the creation of a society which would make for the good life. Theories as to what constituted the good life